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No. 1593

NEW VALLEY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

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EGYPT

NEW VALLEY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS OUTLINED

Area's Agricultural Future Called Bright

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Oct 76 pp 34, 35

[Interview with Ibrahim Shukri, governor of New Valley Governorate: 'How Can We Extend the Green Carpet From the Nile Valley to the New Valley?']

[Text] This man went from the Nile to the New Valley.

He has lived his life in and for agriculture. He dreams of turning the whole land of Egypt green. He is living with one of Egypt's most important causes, that of "the land and the peasant."

This man has lived with this cause in the Egyptian Parliament and in all the organizations our country has seen since the early fifties, finally assuming responsibility for the Governorate of the New Valley in 1974. In fact, he has lived with it since he graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture in June 1939, and his work has been in agriculture, in addition to his assuming responsibility for public work as a member of parliament, an appointed member of companies connected with agriculture, secretary of the Socialist Union in al-Daqahliyah, leader of the agriculturalists' trade union, member of the Secretariat General, and secretary of professionals.

The man is Eng Ibrahim Shukri, governor of the New Valley Governorate since May 1974.

This man's age is approaching 60; he was born in September 1916. He graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture of Cairo University in June 1939. From the time he graduated until 1950, he engaged in agriculture, alongside public activity; he was then elected deputy for the Sharbin constituency in 1950. He is known for the fact that he was the first person to come to Parliament before the Revolution with a plan to restrict [land] ownership to 50 feddans.

When the Revolution occurred, it searched for expert employees, and Eng Ibrahim Shukri was at the head of the list. He was chosen to be a member of the Parliamentary Committee the Revolutionary Command Council formed in 1953. Ten years later, in 1963, he was chosen secretary of the Socialist Union in the Governorate of al-Daqahliyah, then deputy for the constituency of Sharbin in 1964, in the first Parliament in which workers and peasants occupied half the seats. One year after that, the farmers chose him to be their trade union chief in 1965, and the members of the Agricultural Development Committee chose him to be vice-chairman, then chairman, of the committee in the years 1964 and 1966. This was one of the immediate reasons why he began to visit the valley and became acquainted with its problems.

[Question] How were you chosen to bear the responsibility for the New Valley?

[Answer] I considered this appointment an assignment from the president and commander, Anwar al-Sadat, following the great October victory, to work to achieve victories in fields of development, especially in regard to the desert, which accounts for 95 percent of the area of the Republic. The October Paper adopted the strategy of drawing up a new Map of Egypt by developing the desert.

[Question] What are the fruits of your trip and your study of the New Valley in this period?

[Answer] There has been a clear conception that agricultural projects in general are suffering from a shortage in credits allotted to them to continue work in them. The bright point in the information which has been gathered together before me is the presence of large volumes of phosphate in the Abu Tartur region. I learned all the details on that from the Egyptian Geological Authority. The beginning of my work in the valley started there: with my endeavor to strip the mask away from this mineral resource in Egypt. I issued a publication on the subject of the Abu Tartur phosphate and attended a visit from the minister of industry and mining during the first month following my appointment as governor. It was apparent that the Abu Tartur phosphate project could have a rapid payout, conforming to the circumstances of development in Egypt, and could be a great economic base as far as the New Valley was concerned. It could be a motive force in other economic fields within the valley.

The speech by President Muhammad Anwar al-Sadat in Alexandria on 27 July of the same year, and his discussion of the phosphate at Abu Tartur and the quantities present in the deposit, were the spark which began preparation of the equipment necessary to exploit the New Valley phosphate.

[Question] We would like to get a picture of the condition of the valley since your assumption of responsibility for it.

[Answer] I can say that at the time I assumed responsibility for the valley, the existing picture of the agricultural projects was that of a kind of shortening of lines to their smallest size, due to circumstances of a shortage of credits. It was necessary for me to declare that it was harmful to continue this policy, especially as concerned the projects on which agreement had actually been made and for which valid accounts existed for the provision of water and land. There was a danger in leaving wells shut down for a long time, causing them to be exposed to corrosion or rupture, and the suspension of projects reduced the benefits derived from the valley's livestock, poultry, bee and medicinal herb raising and cultivation resources.

In brief, I found that a sound basis would exist for all these various activities, if we pressed them forward. Among them, of course, was the mining of phosphate from Abu Tartur and copper ore in the area south of the Baris Oasis, in the Jabal-al-Shabb region, where an agreement has recently been reached with an American company and a group of Egyptian investors to exploit this ore. Also there are the climatic conditions of the valley in the winter period, to say nothing of the possibility of producing certain vegetables, particularly tomatoes, since their productive season in the valley comes at a period when tomato output in the Nile Valley is low; thus, it will be possible to provide Cairo with the New Valley tomato crop during this tight period although there are some difficulties from the standpoint of transportation. Since there will be a specific rate of output, it will be necessary to process the tomatoes because they do not meet export conditions. This requires the presence of a plant to press and can tomatoes, in the event of an expansion in their cultivation.

As far as poultry raising is concerned, the rapidly fattened (Nukalas) variety has been added, for purposes of providing meat, to the al-Fayyumi and Alexandrian types which were already raised for the purpose of distribution to peasants. This has succeeded notably and its output has been successful. In addition there are the Rumi varieties, and an expanded program has been set forth for Peking ducks, to increase these to 100,000 by 1977. This is preparatory to work on the great project to produce 1 million ducks, which will naturally be followed by the presence of a refrigerator and a small mechanized slaughterhouse.

[Question] What about other areas of production?

[Answer] One of the goals I set before myself was to try to push forward all other types of production, especially those which had been suspended

or which circumstances demanded be developed, such as the ice plant, which was put back into operation, and also the performance of studies on the oxygen plant, which is a necessary element in the Abu Tartur phosphate project. To this one might add the clay brick factory; Arab contractors are now making studies on the most feasible means for using brick clay in the phosphate project installations.

Regarding beekeeping, there was a fundamental obstacle which obstructed its expansion, indeed threatened the hives with extinction; this was the "bee wolf" insect. We therefore made plans to eliminate this insect in 1975 and 1976 by catching the insect itself and trying to do away with it in its habitats.

We have reached results which give good tidings in this field, in cooperation with the University of Amsterdam, in eliminating this insect, God be thanked, and it has been possible to reach agreement with University of Amsterdam experts to collect these insects for them and agreement has been reached to set forth a program under the supervision of the National Research Center and the Scientific Research Academy to introduce an insect which will eliminate the "bee wolf."

As far as agricultural projects in general are concerned, it has been possible to carry out a program to deal with the tenuous situation in al-Kharijah Oasis.

A program was carried out in the past to drill replacement wells in regions requiring additional amounts of water to rectify the obsolescence and shortcomings of some old wells, which are customary as far as flowing wells are concerned. Implementation of this program to provide all requirements is continuing.

I can say that the entire region of al-Kakhilah does not require replacement wells; it requires stimulation wells to increase farming and population density where there is manpower. The al-Kharijah area still needs some wells and the Baris region does also. We hope to complete all this next year.

[Question] Has the agricultural problem of the New Valley become obvious enough to admit of efficacious treatment?

[Answer] I can say that the agricultural problem present in the New Valley has become plain and obvious now that research on the groundwater basin in the region has been presented through the United Nations project and space satellite research. The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation is taking charge of the matter of coordinating water resources and organizing the drainage situation. We have acquired the use of the

highest-quality pipe materials used in wells and a knowledge of aquifers. We have acquired substantial results with techniques for transmitting water through closed or covered channels.

In this field, efforts are still being made to test new types of plastic channels.

In addition, there is the use of new irrigation methods to provide greater volumes of water, by using the drip system, for example.

This is above and beyond the construction of tanks to provide water at night, during the period when it is difficult to use water directly because of climatic conditions in the winter season.

Regarding various types of crops and trees, a substantial yield of results which can be relied on in the future and enlarged upon has been attained. I can single out for mention the expansion of date-palm cultivation as well as expansion in the cultivation of animal fodder crops, particularly Hijazi bersim.

Eng Ibrahim Shukri, governor of the New Valley, paused a few moments, then said, emphatically,

All that is required now is to provide sufficient credits to make use of water actually present in wells which have been drilled in the areas of al-Zayyat, West Mawhub, Abu Minqar, and al-Farafirah, and to conduct research into the subject of drilling new wells in areas where water resources will permit the number of wells to be increased.

[Question] I asked Eng Ibrahim Mahmud Shukri, governor of the New Valley, about the existing services provided in the New Valley.

[Answer] Existing services in the valley are considered to be supervisory in form.

If we start by talking about health services, the health units have been able to cover all villages. There are sections for first aid and others for medical care in the population concentrations in the west. It is worth pointing out that the ratio of doctors to inhabitants is considered the best in the entire Republic.

With regard to education, all stages of education are available, even the secondary stage, with all its fields.

The proportion of students in various educational stages among the inhabitants of the valley (aside from those attending universities outside the valley) comes to 25 percent.

There are actually 23,000 male and female students in the various schools of the valley belonging to the Ministry of Education and the institutes of al-Azhar.

This is as far as education is concerned.

As far as communications go, there is no problem in the valley; communications service has been facilitated within the various areas of the New Valley, outside it as far as al-Farafirah, and between al-Kharijah and Cairo, in the form of new buses with more than one trip per day. There is an internal bus for the town of al-Kharijah, and we are being attentive to preserving this level by replacing depreciated units with new ones, since the condition of some roads is bad.

What was said about education and communications goes for supply commodities.

All supply commodities are available in the New Valley. Meat prices are reasonable in comparison with their high prices in various areas of the Republic.

As far as housing is concerned, efforts are being made to erect housing to cope with the population increase. However, more facilities are required to provide all necessary requirements, especially since we are proceeding toward large and diverse projects in the valley which require an increased population.

[Question] What about the future of the valley?

[Answer] As far as the future is concerned, hopes are very great that this region of our country, which accounts for more than 40 percent of the area of our Republic, will be developed. To exploit all the resources and raw materials in the region, it will be necessary to complete the network of roads, by paving them or preparing them in the initial stages. I should single out for mention the road connecting al-Dakhilah, al-Farafirah and Abu Minqar. Then, I consider that it is important to link al-Farafirah up to al-Bahriyah. Thus, it will be possible for there to be a belt road from Cairo to Asyut, Asyut to al-Kharijah, al-Kharijah to al-Dakhilah, thence to al-Farafirah, from al-Farafirah to the al-Bahriyah Oasis, and then back to al-Jizah.

Thus al-Farafirah will be closer to Cairo than Asyut.

To this one should add the Forties Road, which is the extension of the currently existing road from Asyut to al-Kharijah and Baris and goes from Baris to the Salimah Oasis in the Sudan, where the roads to Danqalah and the western Sudan intersect.

If we are able to complete this network of roads it will subsequently be possible to think of linking the Oasis of al-Farafirah to Siwah, since there is a project now to connect Siwah to Marsa Matruh.

Roads and road systems are the first step toward any projects to develop any economic aspect of the New Valley. Roads constitute the primary obstacle to the exploitation of certain areas, such as al-Farafirah and Abu Minqar, which have begun to be exploited and have become favorable for conditions of exploitation, especially agricultural.

If these roads are constructed, I will be able to imagine the establishment of agricultural and industrial settlements in Abu Minqar and al-Farafirah, and it will be possible to imagine the establishment of industrial settlements concentrating on the raw materials of copper, sand used for glass, which exists in extensive areas and has existed in al-Bahriyah in the past. Also, phosphate has been discovered in al-Kharijah and copper ore in the south of Baris.

[Question] Regarding the Forties Road, how can use be made of this in the future?

[Answer] Use may be made of the Forties Road essentially to create a road which has been established for reaching the Sudan, especially the north and the west of this fraternal country, since ancient times. Therefore, it will be possible to stimulate contact and revive commercial movement through this road, as well as to accelerate implementation of programs of industrial and agricultural integration between Egypt and the Sudan. Proof of this is the fact that the two villages of Northern and Southern al-Maks, to the south of Baris, are still experiencing the commercial activity which existed since earliest times as a result of use of this route.

It is worth mentioning that the heavy equipment belonging to the REGWA company, which has been used to drill wells in the western Sudan and has been transported from the New Valley to the western Sudan via this road, was transported in 40 shipments. Naturally, this opens new avenues of hope for us in realizing the concept of using livestock in the western Sudan and transporting it to Egypt by establishing stations in the form of quarantines at specific intervals, then constructing a large mechanized slaughterhouse in the valley subsequent to that, and introducing meat brought in from the Sudan into the Republic. The New Valley as a whole will be considered a large quarantine area for livestock brought in from the Sudan.

In addition, the Forties Road may be used in another manner: it can link us up with the plains south of the valley. There is a carefully-studied plan to classify soils and, as is well-known, the presence has

been confirmed of arable plains amounting to almost 3 million feddans, of which a large portion is considered to possess first or second class potential for reclamation and can be irrigated by a canal leading from a gulf which lies uphill from it. The canal will require construction of a parallel road from Lake Nasir and will irrigate 1 million feddans without rising in altitude. The level of the lake will permit this, in the event it rises to the storage peak. I am happy, finally, that the minister of irrigation has talked about future projects, among which are a half million [feddans] to be newly-planted in the south of the valley.

If we add to all the future projects we have mentioned the industries which will grow in the valley, particularly phosphate, they may turn the New Valley into one of the regions attracting major projects which will absorb population and increase the national income. Thus it will truly be possible, as the president declared, to draw a new map of Egypt.

The discussion with Eng Ibrahim Mahmud Shukri, governor of the New Valley, came to an end.

There are immense resources, areas where the smokestacks of factories may rise alongside green expanses ready for development and bustling tourist activity. This is a glance of assessment at the New Valley and the map of the future for the valley and every area of Egypt.



A program has been set forth for next year to produce 100,000 Peking ducks, rising to 1 million in the future.

New Phosphate Deposits Will Generate Billions in Income...

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Oct 76 p 36

[Article: "The Phosphate at Abu Tartur: How Can It Change the Appearance of Life in Egypt?"]

[Text] The phosphate at Abu Tartur in the New Valley is one of the major discoveries the General Geological Survey and Mining Projects Authority has carried out in recent years.

From the beginning of the 20th Century until the sixties, the emphasis lay on mining industries situated in areas of the Red Sea and the Nile Valley--especially as concerned the search for phosphate. Although there were deposits of this mineral in the Eastern Desert and Nile Valley areas, at al-Siba'iyah near Isna, they did not inspire optimism because they were of small quantity.

Today, phosphate is one of the world's strategic minerals and the major countries, specifically are rushing after it. An example of that is what has happened in the Moroccan Sahara, which impelled Spanish imperialism, especially in the days of Franco, to take a most adamant stand and refuse to leave the Sahara gracefully.

Once we realize the value of this mineral, we see that it can contribute hundreds of millions, indeed billions, of pounds to Egypt's national income.

Therefore, the discovery of deposits of phosphate in commercial quantities in the New Valley, in a belt extending for more than 100 kilometers between al-Kharijah and al-Dakhilah in the Abu Tartur Hills, must be considered important. President Muhammad Anwar al-Sadat emphasized this in his speech in Alexandria on the 23rd anniversary of the July Revolution.

There is a story behind the discovery of the phosphate mines at Abu Tartur. Some details of it were related by Dr Rushdi Sa'id, chairman of the board of the authority, when he took a trip to visit the phosphate mines in the Red Sea and al-Siba'iyah areas. Dr Rushdi Sa'id said,

"I returned from my trip to these two areas with the impression that their phosphate reserves were so small that they could not be exploited economically.

"Then someone came to me and reminded me, at the end of 1968, of the presence of thick strata of phosphate ore in an area between al-Dakhilah and al-Kharijah in the New Valley, concentrated in Abu Tartur. This prompted me to think of carrying out studies and research to ascertain the volumes and evaluate the reserves of this deposit.

"When the news of the party I had sent out to the desert at the beginning of 1969 arrived, confirming the great thickness of the phosphate stratum in the western section of the Abu Tartur hills, it was confirmed to me that I was on the verge of a great discovery. I decided immediately to send a rotary drilling party to study the degree to which the ore extended beneath the hills. I started to think about the volume of investment required, the operating costs for exploiting this ore, the limits on the volume of production, and what the country could gain if it started on it. I made a field study of the project to mine this ore and, from this, it became apparent to me that the volume of investment could not in any case be less than 90 million pounds and that a production totalling from 6 to 7 million tons per year would make the project profitable and would provide a great impetus for mining.

"This encouraged me to try to get the Abu Tartur phosphate development project included in the Third Five-Year Plan. The reason for this was that results from drilling two wells in the Abu Tartur Hills proved that the phosphate strata extended over a great distance, and the results of the chemical analyses had started bringing good news about the high grade of the ore, which could be treated without great loss and without need for complicated concentration operations."

Dr Rushdi Sa'id went on to say, "Since I have been recording the story of the discovery of the Abu Tartur phosphate mine, the great role which my colleagues and men carried out in the mine itself, and the extent of the effort and self-sacrifice they made in their work (under circumstances which are to be considered among the most difficult to live under as far as what I have seen in my long life of working in the Sahara goes) is a story which deserves to be recorded. The Abu Tartur Hills are extremely impassible from the outside and getting to them is a most difficult affair when travelling on foot--not to speak of moving mechanized transport into the hills. Their surface is covered with a fine red dust, which is often stirred up into a sticky dust covering the skin, food and tents with its blood-red color during the first storm or trip into the hills. They are also open to the force of winds which are fierce, intensely cold in winter and extremely hot in summer."

I asked Dr Rushdi Sa'id what the discovery of the Abu Tartur phosphate meant to him, and he said:

"When the development of this mine is completed, it will give our country a mineral output surpassing all the mineral ores, rocks and salts the

land of Egypt is producing today combined, and surpassing everything Egypt is extracting today at least four times over in value. This fact alone proved the scope of the work the authority is carrying out and the amount of progress and forward motion it has achieved in order for mining to take the place it deserves in the national economy.

"Should I wish after all that, to assess this great find, it can be calculated in terms of the actual value of the ore before it is extracted for treatment--3 pounds per ton, or a total of 1.8 billion pounds. Perhaps this is one of the greatest reserves of wealth Egypt has discovered to the present. This discovery is not only to be considered one of the greatest mineral finds in Egypt--it is also one of the greatest mineral finds in the world, since the proved reserves are in no case less than 5 percent of the world's total proved reserves of this ore."

I asked the chairman of the Mining Authority about the project plan the authority had set forth, and he said,

"The plan actually will begin with the proving-up of reserves adequate for 50 years' mining, plus 20 percent of the phosphate ore, which will remain in the mine, leaving the walls and other things intact. On this account, the authority has set forth a plan to prove reserves totalling 600 million tons in volume.

"Naturally, the proving up of reserves will require rotary drilling programs, to estimate the degree to which the ore extends underneath the Abu Tartur Hills, in addition to chemical, mineral and natural studies and the performance of technological experiments on complete maps for careful planning in order to open up the mine and exploit it over the next 50 years."

He went on to say, "The total investments estimated for completing the project are about 100 million pounds, of which 70 million will take the form of supplementary investments which will not affect the mining itself; that is, most of the investment will go toward development activities to bring the country up to a level with the advanced nations."

I met with Dr Ahmad 'Atif Dardir, director of the Geological Survey Department in the New Valley. He told me,

"Work has been completed on a small experimental mine about 200 meters deep into the hills, by which it has been possible to collect a sample of the ore up to 10 tons in volume, in order to carry out processing tests with the objective of improving the specifications of the ore. It has been possible easily to eliminate aluminum, magnesium and silica impurities through experiments of concentration by floatation, which have been concluded this year."

The director of the Geological Survey Department went on to say,

"According to the plan, 10 million tons will be produced per year. This is an ambitious plan; however, after the ore is concentrated, production will amount to 7 million tons."

"In our program, we will fabricate about 1 million tons inside Egypt and export the rest."

What about the Geological Survey Department in the New Valley?

"The Geological Survey Department is carrying out the Abu Tartur phosphate project through the Survey Department in the New Valley. This is a new institution there. The purpose in establishing it is for there to be, in the region, an agency specializing in geological and mining activities which will conduct exploration and reconnaissance activities in the valley.

"The first activity the department is carrying out now is a detailed study of the phosphate in Abu Tartur. The long-range program is to explore for mineral resources within the jurisdiction of the New Valley Governorate, up to the borders of the Sudan."

I asked, "How did the phosphate deposits come into being?"

The answer came, "Phosphate is the remains of the bones and excrement of animals which lived in shallow or ancient seas."

What is phosphate used for?

"It is used in the phosphatic fertilizer industry. It is also used to produce phosphoric acid and in mineral phosphorus, which is a very desirable material for many modern industries."

Finally, the director of the survey in the New Valley said,

"Before all else, let me salute those heroes among the unknown soldiers who are working under extremely difficult circumstances with a faith which can accomplish anything. The ability of the Egyptian is as strong as iron."

...And Place Nation Among World's Largest Reserves

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Oct 76 p 37

[Article: "The Phosphate Mine and the Road to Attainment of the October Paper Strategy"]

[Text] There is no doubt that when exportation of the first shipment of Abu Tartur phosphate from the New Valley Governorate begins, it will strengthen Egypt's economic situation and will in addition make it possible to change the picture of life in Egypt. It will also help to develop the New Valley region economically and socially. In fact, as experts say, it will be a factor attracting inhabitants and reducing the density of the population along the Nile Valley.

Indicative of the interest of officials in this great project, which lies within the framework of the special interest bestowed on iron, steel and aluminum, is the issuance of Ministerial Decree No 749 for the Year 1974, dated 2 July 1974, which assigned supervision of implementation of the Abu Tartur phosphate project to the General Authority for Construction of the Iron and Steel Complex.

Geological survey and study on the project began in 1970, that is, 6 years ago. This survey and study proved the presence of phosphate ore reserves in the Abu Tartur Hills in economic quantities totalling about 987 million tons with a phosphoric pentoxide content ranging from 25 to 26 percent, which can be concentrated to about 30 percent.

Foreign experts supervised and participated in the survey activities.

These joint studies and research activities may be summarized as follows:

- A. A report on the results of the geological survey of the phosphate ore mines, prepared by the Egyptian General Geological Survey Authority and Soviet experts.
- B. A report on the processing reserves of the Abu Tartur phosphate ore, prepared by the Neftichempromexport Authority.

This report concluded that evaluations and studies bearing on the exploitation of Abu Tartur phosphate have proved the economic validity of the project and also proved that implementation of the project will help develop the region economically and socially.



Mouth of the new phosphate mine

The technical and economic report recommended that final designs be drawn up for exploitation of the mine. Most important of these designs are those for detailed geological survey activity, that is, the performance of semi-industrial tests on a sample of the ore to determine the most appropriate means of concentrating it as well as the most appropriate means of processing it.

Since most of the quantities extracted will go for export, the need for constructing the following general facilities, in addition to the process of mining the phosphate ore and processing it at the site, bears on exploitation of the project:

1. A railway line 560 kilometers long from the valley to Safaja on the Red Sea, via Qina.
2. A high-voltage electricity line 250 kilometers long from Naj' Hammadi to the New Valley.

3. A phosphate loading dock, with appurtenances, at the port of Safaja, with an export capacity of 6 million tons.

4. The drilling of deep-water wells at the mine site in the Abu Tartur Hills, with a capacity of about 80,000 cubic meters per day, to provide the water needed for the process of concentrating the ore and for support.

The preliminary studies of all these general facilities have been completed and preparation of the detailed designs needed to construct them by means of the following relevant bodies and authorities is currently underway:

A. The Ports and Lights Department.

B. The Egyptian Railway Authority, in cooperation with the American consulting firm Central Technology.

C. The Egyptian Electricity Authority.

D. The General Construction and Agricultural Development Projects Authority.

As far as the mines are concerned, this will take place through cooperation with a group of Franco-Swiss firms under the supervision of the international consultants Souverain (Alusus) and a group of firms of German experts under the supervision of Lachner Consultants.

This project will accomplish the following main objectives:

First: Exploitation of one of the country's major mineral raw materials resources in international demand for manufacturing the phosphate fertilizer required to cope with the world food crisis.

Second: The volumes allotted for export, about 6 million tons, at a price ranging from 10 to 12 pounds per ton at current prices, will provide balance of payments support equivalent to about \$240 million per year.

The project will bring about a substantial increase in rates of development, since the cost per ton, in the vicinity of Safaja, will be 6 pounds.

Third: Construction of a railway line from the New Valley to the Red Sea via the Nile Valley at Qina will have economic and social effects on the New Valley. In addition, the region from Qina to Safaja will provide the country with a maritime outlet to the south which the various sectors of government will use for foreign trade.

Fourth: Bringing electricity to the New Valley will, in addition to industrial uses, help establish the exploitation of the cultivated area in the New Valley, helping to develop the area and raise its economic and social level. This will consequently attain the October Paper's strategy for a new way for Egypt to develop the Sahara and make optimum use of available natural resources.

Fifth: It will create job opportunities for about 5,500 people in the mine in addition to the labor required for operating the railway and the electricity line.

Activities related to the Phosphate Project on Which Work Is Expected To Start This Year

The activities may be listed as follows:

A. Completion by specialized international expert firms, of the detailed studies required for the preparation of final designs for operating the mine and commencement of construction of a construction and assembly base at the mine worksite.

B. A specialized international firm of experts has been assigned to present the studies which have been completed to confirm the conclusions reached and to determine what must be done to make the project study sound from the technical and economic viewpoint. In addition, it will prepare the detailed project report with which it will be possible to begin carrying out the project.

Construction of the facilities will start with the railway line from Qina to Safaja, in view of the importance of this stretch of the line from the strategic and economic standpoints. Then preparation of the detailed designs required for construction of the general facilities will be completed, and a start will be made on construction of the remaining general facilities as soon as the studies bearing on the mine are completed.

A Program To Carry out the Project

It is proposed that construction of the project and supplementary projects be completed during the 1976-80 Five-Year Plan, provided that coordination of study and construction activities be coordinated so that production may begin in 1980-81.

It is estimated that 5,500 persons will be employed in the phosphate ore mining project. The housing units required will total about 400; they will all have to be outfitted, and schools, clubs, a hospital, electricity, water and public health drainage constructed.

To make it possible to transport 20,000 tons of phosphate to the port of Safaja per day, four trains will operate daily with a capacity of 5,000 tons. For this purpose, a freight station will be constructed at the mine to load the trains at maximum speed by automation, along with a similar station at the port of Safaja to unload the trains' cargo. The capacity of the freight and unloading stations will be about 3,000 tons per hour. The Abu Tartur phosphate project is considered the primary export project in the 1976-80 Five-Year Plan. Its direct effect will be to bolster the balance of payments by providing foreign currency through phosphate ore sales estimated at about 6 million tons per year. In addition the project will promote industrial development and settlement in the south of the Western Desert and will link the Nile Valley up with the Red Sea via the railway, giving the Republic a back door for exports and imports.

Sun-Drenched Region Has Huge Solar Power Potential

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Oct 76 p 38

[Article: "Is Oil To Be Found in the New Valley?"]

[Text] Conversation with Eng Muhammad Tal'at Dargham is brilliant and many-faceted.

The secretary-general of the New Valley Governorate is an expert on the area. He started working in the General Sahara Development Authority in 1959, then was appointed president of the al-Kharijah city council [and stayed in this position] until 1971, when he was appointed secretary general of the governorate. In addition to this, Eng Muhammad Tal'at Dargham is chief of the engineers' union in the governorate and at the same time is chairman of the board of the al-Kharijah Youth Center. This naturally affirms and explains to us his great activity.

I visited him in the governorate headquarters. His door is always open--by the way, all the doors of the governorate's offices are open, to receive every inhabitant of the governorate, humble or important.

I talked to Eng Muhammad Tal'at Dargham about the New Valley and its water, farming and population resources and opportunities for tourism and development. After directing all my questions to him at one stroke, conversation. His answers came in a series, as follows; I will list them as these points:

The Sahara is Greater Egypt. Egypt is a desert land, and agriculture consists of a narrow green band along the course of the Nile River.

Among the most elegant descriptions to have been made is this: "Nature gave birth to Egypt in the womb of the desert."

I differ with those who say there is an excess of population in our country. I will say that there is congestion in some areas. There are other areas where there are no inhabitants, or few inhabitants. The lowest population concentration exists in the desert. The real problem of Egypt is, in fact, how to create a balance of population density over the entire area of Egypt.

I consider that for the New Valley region to be an area which will attract [people] communications of all kinds must become available, such as roads, buses, telecommunications, and airplanes--to say nothing of comfortable living and accommodations. We need 90 percent of everything, because no more than 10 percent exists now. There is a shortage in the services area in spite of the fact that the New Valley can absorb one quarter of Egypt's present population.

Development of the Sahara doesn't mean farming. The Nile River is endowed with water enough to farm 6 million feddans and there is a tremendous groundwater reservoir under the New Valley, for which the few opportunities present are not suitable.

We hope that the project to build the canal from Lake Nasir to the valley will be completed. The desert population can give Greater Egypt the future we want. I am optimistic about the future of the New Valley, because there is no breathing space for Egypt's inhabitants except the desert and the New Valley.

Some days ago, experts from an American company came to explore for oil in the southern desert and when we talked with them they confirmed the presence of sedimentary sections in the area. These sedimentary deposits [have] either water or oil. There are also great resources, such as marble, coal and phosphate, actually present in the valley.

The New Valley, by the testimony of witnesses, is the only society in the world which subsists on groundwater. It has the highest rate of exposure to sunlight in the entire world, and solar power may be used to generate electricity.

The New Valley requires a national plan. The valley society is the only one which has built everything through the efforts of its members. This society is distinguished by an honesty, truthfulness and hospitality surpassing description. It is a harmonious society. Mechanical knowledge has become very substantial among the inhabitants, and they use it in drilling wells.

Egyptian tourist companies must pay attention to desert tourism.

My interest in youth is limitless. They are the hope of the future and youth centers are the only places where the young congregate to profit educationally and athletically. There is great solidarity and response among the young, because they find no other field.

The valley is a mine of minerals and energy. It is Egypt's strategic heartland. It is the crossroads for communication between Egypt and Africa. It can be illuminated by electricity from the High Dam, when production of electricity from the latter coincides with the production of electricity from the Qattarah Depression.

Finally, the New Valley can absorb 15 million people.

Greater Livestock Output Planned

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Oct 76 p 39

[Interview with al-Sayyid Raf'at Kamil, assistant secretary general of New Valley Governorate: "When Sri Lanka Ordered 5,000 Tons of Dates"]

[Text] The assistant secretary general of the New Valley Governorate, Eng al-Sayyid Raf'at Kamil, is one of those who have been involved in local government since it was established. His first job in 1956 was in collective units, development, and land reclamation. He also worked as chairman of a village council in 1961, then as director of the collective units for economic stimulation in 1965, and then was appointed to his present position in the New Valley in 1973.

The entire conversation with him was about agriculture and agricultural and livestock production in the governorate.

I came away from him with bold, direct opinions concerning the valley's resources and what is now going on in the valley through the directives of Eng Ibrahim Shukri, the governor, who is also a farmer.

With regard to livestock resources the assistant secretary general of the governorate stated:

"The governorate started developing livestock resources in a scientific manner in 1959. We started with Frisian [cattle] and [Usimi] sheep, categorizing them by wool and by strains.

"We also built stations to produce Peking and Roman duck in the governorate, and the local government did the same.

"We managed to raise the capacity of the al-Fayyumi station to 8,000 hens and have distributed 200,000 ducklings this year, retaining 18,000 as a replacement flock. We also brought in 10,000 for the local market. It is our hope to expand to the extent of the resources available.

"The governor has given attention to Peking ducks especially, because this is an important project, especially since the region has no diseases. As a result of this, we managed to produce 55,000 ducks in a year last season; it is anticipated that this will reach 80,000 ducks next year. We export one-third the output to Sawhaj, Asyut and Cairo."

The agricultural engineer al-Sayyid Raf'at Kamil added,

"The price of a kilogram of chicken here is 52 piasters. A 2-pound duck is the equivalent of 60 piasters, and we have managed to bring the price of a kilogram of small (mashfi) meat to 70 piasters.

"As far as Roman ducks go, we are producing 3,000 hens, which give us 25,000 ducklings. We export Roman ducks to Cairo after meeting local requirements."

[Question] What about vegetables?

[Answer] The farms we are supervising to provide vegetables are 500 feddans in area; it has not been possible so far to persuade the inhabitants to cultivate vegetables. These farms provide us with vegetables and fruit the year round. It should be pointed out that we exported 100 tons of tomatoes to Cairo last year at a time when tomatoes were not available in Cairo.

[Question] What about dates?

[Answer] For dates, there are drying plants belonging to the local government as well as plants for drying onions. The date producing capacity of the plant is 1,000 tons; the onion-drying plant has the capacity to put out 500 tons.

We have increased the price of dates to 100 pounds per ton, and they are sold via cooperative marketing; the central society is assuming responsibility for this. It sends the dates to the factory for sterilization against insects, and after processing they are sold at merchants' auctions.

We hope to export New Valley dates abroad, now that the governor has proposed modern methods for processing them by means of plastic sheets and picking implements lined with plastic. It is worth mentioning that Sri Lanka ordered 5,000 tons from us last year.

[Question] What about onion exports?

[Answer] Agreement has been reached with the al-Nasr Drying Company to operate the factory and enter into the local cooperative marketing system. The company buys the crop from the central society and proceeds to export it. Onions are actually being exported, for the first time, at a price of 27 pounds per ton; their maximum price used to be 15 pounds.

It should be mentioned that land in the valley is not afflicted with white rot. It is therefore considered the sole governorate in Egypt which is free of this pest. We are cultivating 300 feddans with onions and hope to double that.

[Question] What about the reclaimed land, and use of this land?

[Answer] We hope to use the areas now in existence, water for them is available. However, it is a shortage of credits which is delaying us. We hope for investments in order to use the lands, and it should be mentioned that 15,000 pounds have been placed in the budget to begin reclaiming 200 feddans in the al-Zayyat plain. Water is abundant, but we are short on credits.



The Rug and Carpet factory in al-Kharijah.

Climate, Ancient Ruins Are Big Tourist Attractions

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Oct 76 pp 40, 41

[Article: "Desert Tourism: How May It Flourish? A Tour of the New Valley From al-Farafirah to Baris"]

[Text] The New Valley is not the way many people imagine it. It is devoid of trees--it is a number of oases where water has accumulated so that a few scantily-endowed desert communities, or a group of nomadic tribes which never settle down, may endure.

The New Valley Governorate, with the three oases it comprises--al-Kharijah, al-Dakhilah and al-Farafirah--constitutes an important geographical region of the Western Desert of Egypt. The governorate is distinguished by its arable lands and its historic and cultural sites, which have been closely linked with Egypt's civilization over the ages and have played important roles over the millenia.

A Trip through History

Mahmud Hamzah, inspector of antiquities in the New Valley, said,

"If we cast a historical glance, for example, at the Oasis of al-Kharijah, we will see that its most important town was Haybat, that is, 'the city of the plow' which was located 3 kilometers north of the present town of al-Kharijah. Ancient Egyptians symbolized this town by the plow, which indicates and underlines the area's agricultural importance. This region even accumulated grain for the Roman Empire's storehouses in the era when Egypt was a Roman province, when Julius Caesar appeared and Cleopatra--the last of the Ptolemaic rulers in Egypt--was defeated."

The inspector of antiquities in the New Valley went on,

"The Oasis of al-Kharijah also had commercial importance. It lay along the Forties Road, which was a commercial overland route connecting the Nile Valley near the present-day city of Asyut to the Sudan, or what used to be known as the Region of Nubia, and the south, along with the neighboring kingdoms, in ancient times.

"Due to the importance of this commercial artery, the rulers of Egypt during various ancient periods established temples, towns, and guard posts or forts along this route to keep it secure. From north to south we find guard posts with high towers, such as the al-Jab, al-Samirah and Umm al-Qusur posts, and temples, such as the Temple of Haybas, the Temple of al-Ghuwaytah, the Temple of Qasr al-Zaman, and the Temple of Dush,

alongside the big towns which were heavily populated, with their abundant resources, until the Persian Cambyses, who ruled Egypt before the advent of Alexander the Great, came to the New Valley with an army of 500,000 troops, from the city of Tibah (Luxor), heading for Siwah to destroy the temple of Amon there. On his way, Cambyses and his army passed through the Oases of al-Kharijah and al-Dakhilah to approvision themselves with the food and water they required. However, a storm befell this Persian conqueror's army and buried it in sand at a place called 'the Sand Sea' along the road to al-Farafirah, and it has not been found to this day.

"All this, naturally, points up the prosperity the oases of the New Valley enjoyed.

"In addition to the area's agricultural importance in the past and the abundance of wells and springs, it also had great historic importance. The relics which have been unearthed in the village of Balat in al-Dakhilah prove that there has been political, administrative and religious subordination to the Pharaoh of Egypt since the Pharaohs. These are the relics which the late Dr Ahmad Fakhri, the noted archaeologist, came upon.

"A cemetery has been discovered which goes back to the Sith Dynasty, to the days of the reign of King Bibi I, and the pictures in it prove that the ruler of the oases in that period was appointed by the Pharaoh of Egypt.

"The Oasis of al-Farafirah was of importance, as far as the Oases of al-Kharijah and al-Dakhilah and the Nile Valley were concerned, because it was a sort of key to the Egyptian borders to the south.

"In fact, the New Valley contains relics which go back to every historic period. It contains relics which go back to the Old Kingdom of Pharaonic Egyptian history, like the cemeteries which were discovered in Balat and elsewhere. Then there are relics which go back to the late Pharaonic Dynasty, such as the Temple of Haybas--a shrine which is considered one of the most important tourist landmarks in the New Valley, with integrated sections and pictures in good condition. Its construction goes back to the 26th Dynasty, and it was added onto in the following periods, such as the Greek and Roman eras.

"Regarding Christian relics, about 6 kilometers to the north of the town of al-Kharijah there is the famous 'Cemetery of the Vaults', which is considered the oldest cemetery in Christendom. In its midst is the oldest church in the world, next to the church in the Oasis of al-Hayyiz in al-Bahriyah. This cemetery was used from the beginning of the fourth century A.D. to the 11th century and contains 263 'frame' graves in 10 architectural styles. On the walls of the frames, in colors, are depicted the stories of the prophets and renditions from the New Testament.

"In addition to this, there are landmarks of Islamic relics---relics from the first periods of Islam, as well as the Ayyubid and Mamluke periods, in the villages of al-Qasr and al-Qalmun in al-Dakhilah.

"The relics in existence in the village of al-Qasr in al-Dakhilah are considered Islamic archaeological landmarks in the Governorate of the New Valley, since the village's dwellings were built in the Islamic architectural style. Among them is a building, in the form of a school, which goes back to the Ayyubiol age: its first floor was set aside for teaching and its second and third for teachers' dwellings. In addition, there are wooden thresholds set in the frames of the doors of the homes, on which are inscribed verses from the Koran along with the name of the person who made the threshold, the name of the owner of the house, and the date of its construction. The oldest thresholds go back to the 10th century of the Islamic era. In the village of al-Qasr there is also a Mameluke mosque with a round minaret erected on wooden pillars.

"The New Valley does not only contain this ancient cultural heritage.

"Recently, ruins which go back to the stone age were discovered by excavations by the American (Mionidist) University, in areas about 30 kilometers north of the town of al-Kharijah.

"The New Valley, with its oases, contains more than 100 archaeological sites consisting of temples, graves, cemeteries, old towns and guard posts. The temples in the New Valley areas total six, all built of stone, and there are colored paintings inside them representing various religious and secular scenes which ancient Egyptians collected. These areas need care.

"On their behalf, in order to preserve them, the Governorate of the New Valley has been interested in maintaining these archaeological resources. The interest of the governor, Eng Ibrahim Mahmud Shukri, in these antiquities has been great.

"An inspectorate was established in December 1974 to concern itself with the relics lying within the regional scope of the New Valley Governorate.

"The inspectorate has conducted scientific excavations in the Mut area of al-Dakhilah, unearthing a graveyard going back to the Greco-Roman era during the 1975 season.

"The French Oriental Antiquities Institute mission performed excavations in the Dush Temple near the village of Baris, about 120 kilometers south of al-Kharijah, from January to March 1976, and came upon rare archaeological objects.

"The American (Mionidist) University mission has conducted archaeological survey work on areas where there are prehistoric relics and has come upon more than one region around the town of al-Kharjah and south of the village of Baris which contains relics of earliest Stone Age Man.

"Construction has begun on a regional museum in the town of al-Kharjah containing antiquities which have been unearthed within the regional scope of the governorate, including the tablets and objects discovered by the late Dr Ahmad Fakhri in the village of Balat and the antiquities which the current inspector of antiquities, Mahmud Hamzah, came upon as a result of excavations carried out in the town of Mut in al-Dakhilah, as well as the relics which the French Scientific Institute mission uncovered at the Temple of Dush in the village of Baris south of al-Kharjah.



The al-Mazuqah relics in the town of al-Dakhilah.



Water jug borne by a young girl in the New Valley.

"On behalf of these antiquities, the Archaeological Authority, following a visit by the mission headed by Dr Jamal Mukhtar to the New Valley some months ago, has performed architectural repairs on some archaeological sites in the governorate, as well as precise repairs and the reinforcement of colors and paintings on the walls of some graves in vaults."

The Palace of Culture

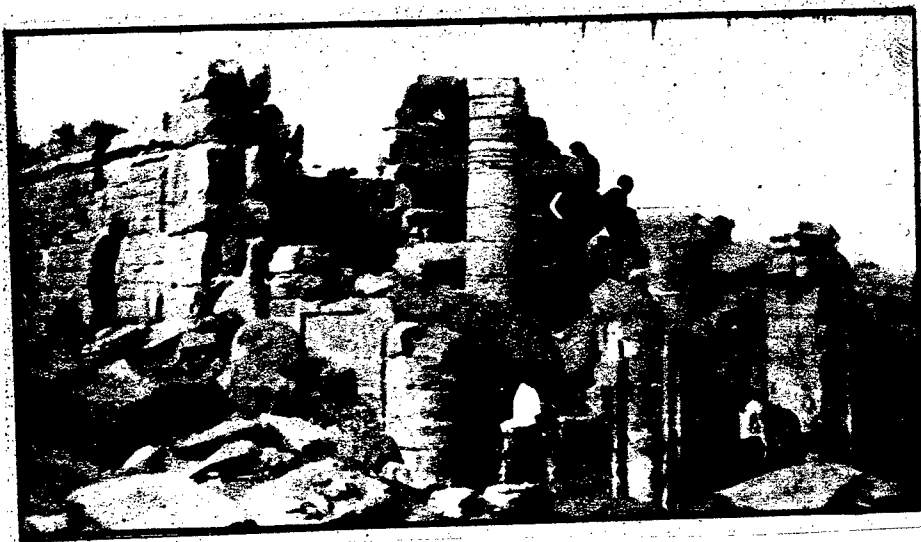
Concern with the New Valley is not restricted to the arena of archaeological lore. There is a palace of culture which is considered the sole authority active in the area of cultural services in the governorate.

The palace, as its director, Ibrahim Khalil, says, serves dispersed population centers and remote villages.

The New Valley Palace of Culture consists of a public library, which is considered the only one in the area of the governorate with the exception of another one in the House of Culture in the village of al-Dakhilah.



Ruins of the village of al-Qasr in the town of al-Dakhilah.



The Dayr al-Hajar Temple

The palace performs the following activities:

First, a folk art troupe, whose members include 25 girls and 30 boys, offers widespread local performances in various areas of the governorate, such as the well and al-Hajalah dances and oasis weddings. The stage troupe also provides central performances included in the stage department's plan in addition to local performances. The stage troupe includes 28 boys and four girls.

There is also a concentration on interest in children through their club, which includes a large group of children. Various activities include folk art, choruses, a children's theater, and a puppet show; these activities are considered the only scope for children's activities in the town of al-Kharijah.

It should be mentioned here that the Palace of Culture began to form a musical troupe this year which includes violinists, accordionists, flautists and lutanists.

Above and beyond these activities, the palace includes a literary club consisting of a short story club, a poetry club, and a book club. There is also a branch for plastic arts, to develop the talents of devotees. In addition there is a section for environmental crafts consisting of two branches, one for rugs and the other for ceramics. With regard to movies, there is one theater belonging to the Palace of Culture, the Haybas Theater, which has been designated the most important archaeological temple in the New Valley.

Desert Tourism

The rapporteur of the Regional Authority to Stimulate Tourism talked, stating,

"The New Valley Governorate is a desert governorate, enjoying a winter of sunshine, clear skies and dry air. The governorate is rich in relics.

"The Regional Authority to Stimulate Tourism in the governorate, under the chairmanship of Eng Ibrahim Shukri, governor of the New Valley, is involved in all tourist projects through the Ministry of Tourism.

"There is no doubt that, after taking a tour of various areas of the New Valley, one can state that there are many tourist sites in the governorate to which numerous foreign tourists of all nationalities come in successive groups. They enjoy the climate and antiquities of the governorate, especially the mineral baths which are distinguished by their warm waters and sulphur springs, whose effectiveness in curing rheumatic and kidney ailments has been proved. In addition, one enjoys sunbathing and reclining on the hot sands."

What about hotels?

Mr Farid Muhammad Tawfiq said, "In the governorate there is a first-class tourist hotel, belonging to the governorate's Regional Authority to Stimulate Tourism, which has 30 fully-furnished rooms to receive tours and tourist groups. It also has a fully-equipped cafeteria to accommodate the maximum number of guests."

What are the most important areas to which tourists go?

"Among the tourist areas which numerous visitors frequent is the Peking Duck garden in the village of al-Munirah, which is about 20 kilometers from the town of al-Kharijah and contains many types of ducks in the form of a complete farm, and a park for visitors where the tourist enjoys views of nature, greenery and life. A group of wells to develop the desert are also being outfitted along the Baris Road, to create a second tourist area including a swimming pool and a green area as space where inhabitants of the governorate and their guests may circulate."

Here a question arises: How can tourism in the governorate be stimulated?

The rapporteur of the Regional Authority to Stimulate Tourism said, "Everything I mentioned is taking place as a result of efforts of the people in the governorate itself, with limited financial resources in the form of aid from the Ministry of Tourism which is not enough for the building and supplies needed to stimulate tourist activity.

"All we ask is that attention be given to these regions by the Ministry of Tourism and that it offer full assistance so that we can complete our projects and receive the maximum number of tourist groups. In addition, it is essential to establish a tourist company involved with organizing tours for tourists."

How can the desert tourist project be completed?

"Completing it will require that cabanas and bungalows be built around mineral springs in al-Dakhilah Park and that the roads leading to these springs, along with some roads leading to monument areas, be improved.

"Wouldn't it be nice if the Son et Lumiere project could be installed in the Temple of Haybas in al-Kharijah, as well as in the al-Bajwat Gardens, for which there is no equal in the whole world, so that the tourist could spend as much time as possible in the governorate!"

Young People in the New Valley

We cannot conclude a discussion of culture in the New Valley without dealing with the young people of this remote governorate, which is very much concerned with youth.

In fact, young people pursue their athletic inclinations in every village, since there are youth care centers in every village.

Mr Hasan Hafiz, director of youth care, said,

"In the town of al-Kharijah, the capital, there is a municipal youth center where young people in the government receive complete attention. This center is considered a splendid model. The young people are trained, and carnivals are arranged, in the field of arts and hobbies.

In the sphere of athletic, health and scout training, in the field of educational and cultural development, and in public service, young people find their only outlet in the town's youth center among specialized teachers."

Finally: the New Valley, with its archaeological relics, springs, parks and ponds, needs attention from competent bodies so that it may become a Mecca for Egyptian and foreign visitors and tourists, especially since it contains desert tourist projects--the latest word in twentieth-century tourism.

Rapid Exploitation Called Urgent National Necessity

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Oct 76 p 43

[Interview with Ahmad Abu-al-'Ala, director of development of New Valley Governorate: "A Fact Which Must Be Declared: Exploitation of Egypt's Deserts Is an Urgent National Necessity"]

[Text] Development is a nice word, and it is even nicer when the conversation is revolving around development in the New Valley. Development of the New Valley is, naturally, development of the desert, and development of the desert means sweat and toil, unremitting war against sand and storm, and remoteness from civilization. Development, as a matter of fact, is a kind of struggle between nature and man, and it imposes conditions. Specialized studies must be made of every little detail so that the caravans of development can arrive armed with science and knowledge. Those who are carrying out the development process know that they are fighting and struggling like soldiers on a battlefield.

If we set down discussions about development in the New Valley, you will hear tales stranger than fantasy.

Our meeting was with the agricultural engineer Ahmad Abu-al-'Ala, director of development in the New Valley, to whom, with his agency, has been assigned responsibility for developing the New Valley agriculturally, economically and industrially, in addition to developing the society there.

In fact, work on the New Valley project began in the early part of 1960.

The New Valley, as Eng Ahmad Abu-al-'Ala sees it, consists of a series of low spots in the southern part of the Western Desert--al-Farafirah, al-Dakhilah, al-Kharijah, then southern al-Kharijah or what is called the southern New Valley. The series is parallel to the Nile Valley, from which it is 200 kilometers distant to the west, and is approximately 700 kilometers long, from the Sudanese border to the south to the al-Farafirah Depression in the north. It then extends north and north-west to the al-Bahriyah Oasis and Siwah.

As the director of development says, the objective in developing the desert--one portion of which is represented by the New Valley Project--is to conduct a complete economic and social survey of the Egyptian Desert and investigate the potential for exploiting its various resources.

It is worth mentioning that the study and investigation include all diverse activities, especially groundwater, soil classification, development of plant and animal resources, infrastructure, and settlement, with the objective of alleviating the population pressure on the Nile Valley and establishing a balance between the twin elements of man and land.

The agricultural engineer Ahmad Abu-al-'Ala went on, "Desert development activity includes all the abovementioned activities, and the work plan has been set out in stages, namely:

"A. The first stage: This is the stage of studies; it consists of the two most important elements, that of groundwater and the limits to its potential, then a study of the use of groundwater produced by artesian wells in the horizontal expansion of agriculture and the use of economic crop mixes on arable lands selected by processes of soil classification.

"B. The second stage: This is the test stage, with the establishment of experimental farms to attain a crop mix which is compatible with the nature of these regions in addition to various and numerous activities, most important of which is the development of animal resources, housing, infrastructure, settlement, and so forth."

[Question] What about studies bearing on groundwater resources and arable land ?

[Answer] Groundwater resources in the New Valley and arable land resources as well are not just great--they are staggering.

[Question] How so?

[Answer] This is apparent from a review of the low spots in the valley.

Let us begin with the al-Farafirah Depression. When we realize that the total area of this depression is 3.5 million feddans and its population is 12,000, the area of arable land may be estimated at about 700,000 feddans, not to mention the arable area at a level economically suitable for production of groundwater, which is 150,000 feddans.

It should be noted at this point that the area currently being cultivated is 110 feddans; these are old family plots based around 27 water wells; then 100 feddans are being cultivated by deep wells.

The groundwater pressure in this depression is amazing. This is apparent from the discharge of five productive wells flowing under their own pressure which averages a total of 12,000 to 13,000 cubic meters per well per day. This means that one well can irrigate from 400 to 500 feddans.

As far as the 45,000 population al-Dakhilah Depression, whose total area is 1.25 million feddans, goes, there is an arable area estimated at about 400,000 feddans in addition to an arable area below the level economically suitable for the production of groundwater totalling 85,000 feddans.

The area currently under cultivation in the al-Dakhilah Depression totals 9,000 feddans; it is an old farm based around 750 wells in addition to 12,000 feddans on deep wells.

The total area of the al-Kharijah Depression, whose population totals 40,000, is 1.8 million feddans. The arable area there totals 600,000 feddans, and there are 130,000 feddans of arable land under the level economically suited for groundwater production.

The area actually being cultivated is 3,000 feddans; this is old-style agriculture, based around 220 wells. There are 7,000 feddans based around deep wells.

Next we come to the South al-Kharijah, or Southern New Valley, Project.

Through soil classification, the field investigation of soils, and the use of climatological maps, it has been discovered that the total area of the region is 7 million feddans and the arable area totals 3 million in addition to approximately 930,000 feddans suitable for cultivation under the 180 level.

This area can be irrigated by water from Lake Nasir, to the extent that there are surplus water resources in the lake via a canal originating at a point above it, in the west of Lake Nasir, about 40 kilometers away, and extending north for a distance of roughly 3,500 [sic] kilometers. The canal can irrigate this area up to the southern part of the al-Kharijah Depression in the environs of the Oasis of Baris at 'Ayn al-Qasr. Beyond that, it will be possible to extend the canal to the north, traversing the Depression of al-Kharijah for a further distance of 98 kilometers to area of 600,000 feddans of arable land we mentioned.

[Question] I would like Eng Ahmad Abu-al-'Ala to evaluate the work on the New Valley Project.

[Answer] First, I would like to mention that the authority formed at the end of 1959 to carry out the objectives of desert development has gone by a number of names: the General Desert Development Authority, the General Desert Development Organization, the Desert Development Authority, then the Executive Agency for Desert Projects. This last agency was merged with the Land Development Authority and given the name of General Construction and Agricultural Development Projects Authority, to achieve the objectives of developing the desert as well as developing new lands in the Nile Valley.

The name of the New Valley Project is now the New Valley Development Directorate.

Before answering your question, I would like, at this point, to mention a very important observation, which is that there is a big difference between development and reclamation. Land reclamation is to be considered just one element of development, which in addition to land reclamation, includes the construction of roads, housing, migration and settlement, livestock resource development, and the construction of factories, especially agricultural processing plants. We consider that this has now been accomplished in al-Kharijah and al-Dakhilah. It is a great achievement in the way of paved roads, residential and government structures and facilities, hospitals, schools, power stations, airports, modern villages (which total 13 in al-Kharijah and two in al-Dakhilah), and so forth. In addition there are the lands which have been reclaimed, newly-planted, and deeded over, approaching 12,600 feddans in area in al-Kharijah and al-Dakhilah. In addition, cooperatives have been established to serve property-owners and farmers in general.

[Question] Is what has been achieved so far to be considered the end of the matter?

[Answer] No, of course not. What has been achieved is to be considered just points of emphasis for a takeoff toward development of the Egyptian desert and exploitation of its resources on a broad scale, to realize an increase in national income and alleviate the population pressure on that narrow strip the Nile Valley.

The fact is that what has been spent on the valley so far comes to 38 million pounds, 17 million of which has been for land reclamation in the form of irrigation, drainage, levelling and well drilling--in other words, water resource management. As is well known, 45,000 feddans have been reclaimed; thus, reclamation of a feddan costs about 400 pounds; since the area under cultivation based on deep wells totals 20,000 feddans, one may consider that a cultivated feddan costs 800 pounds. By comparing this figure to the level of land reclamation, at [various] levels, we find that the feddan in Egypt costs the least because the reclamation of a feddan, on the world-wide average, greatly exceeds this figure.

We must point out here that water has not been drawn from the remaining 20,000-feddan area of the 45,000-feddan area which has been reclaimed. That is to say, these are areas for which sources of water through intrinsic flowing pressure have not been provided at all. The wells drilled in these areas do not flow under their own pressure and in addition they have been in the study stage, especially in the al-Kharijah Depression, which is conspicuous for its geological complexity.

It must also be pointed out that the scientific results it has been possible to acquire from the studies made in various areas cannot be evaluated at any price--indeed, what has been done in the New Valley has been the basis on which local government has subsequently been based.

[Question] What is the Valley Development Directorate's responsibility at the present time, and what are the horizons for the future?

[Answer] After the establishment of the local government, and its pursuit of various activities, it was considered appropriate that development activity should return to its original objective and that service activities should be diminished, in the sense that the cooperatives and the Agricultural Directorate should be the ones to serve and supervise the cultivated lands, while the irrigation and drainage systems and the replacement of wells and auxiliary wells and so forth should be the work of the Ministry of Irrigation, and the same with housing, public health and so on.

One may therefore summarize the New Valley Development Directorate's activity in the near and distant future as the following:

A [sic]. By making a comparison between rates of population increase and the horizontal agricultural expansion the population requires (by means of the reclamation of new lands to cover the food and clothing requirements of these new mouths), we are, in order to obtain desired results from the development plan, for which palpable results have not appeared so far, since most food-stuffs, especially grain, have been imported, compelled toward an inescapable fact: exploitation of the Egyptian desert has become an urgent national necessity--is, indeed, a matter of life or death, especially since climatic disturbances have appeared in most countries which export a surplus of crops.

God be thanked that there is a future for Egypt, if sound plans are set forth which are distinguished by depth of strategic theory. There are 932,000 feddans in the south of the valley, reliant on the waters of the Nile; 53,000 feddans in al-Kharjah dependent on groundwater (which can be increased to 600,000 feddans if the southern part of the valley is extended, due to a surplus of water in Lake Nasir); and, on top of that, there are 85,000 feddans in al-Dakhilah relying on groundwater and 150,000 feddans in al-Farafirah.

Finally, I asked Eng Ahmad Abu-al-'Ala, director of the New Valley Development Directorate, about the international studies going on in the valley: what is their nature?

He answered by stating, There is a groundwater study underway in conjunction with the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, especially in the Depressions of al-Kharijah and al-Dakhilah, to ascertain the size of the underground reservoir, the economic extraction of groundwater through the drilling of artesian wells and lifting by pump, then the optimum use of this water in economic crop compositions on a 1,000-feddan farm, then horizontal agricultural expansion by reproducing these specialized agricultural units over a broad area.

It should be pointed out that these studies are close to completion and portend great conclusions regarding groundwater resources and their use in agriculture. They will also be the proper scientific basis for horizontal agricultural expansion projects in the future.

Problems Exist, But Can Be Overcome

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Oct 76 p 44

[Article: "Problems of Agriculture in the New Valley, and How They Are Being Solved"]

[Text] It is nice to talk with those on whom the responsibility for agriculture and development in the New Valley has been cast, because they have many stories of struggle and combat with nature, sand and heat in their satchels.

Eng Sa'd 'Abd-al-Bari, director of the Directorate of Agriculture, head of the Agriculturalists' Union in the governorate, and chairman of the board of directors of the Consumer Cooperative Society Department, has 6 years of experience in the New Valley, that is, from 1970 on. Before that he was in one of the Governorates of the Crossing of Suez in October 1973, practicing his agricultural work in al-Isma'iliyah for a period of 6 years as well. Thus his discourse is one of comparison of two of Egypt's governorates: al-Isma'iliyah and the New Valley.

I began the conversation with him on the difference between agriculture in al-Isma'iliyah and the New Valley, and he said,

"The New Valley is different from al-Isma'iliyah, of course. In the valley, wells are the only source of water; these wells depend on groundwater reservoirs and there is no rain--to such a degree that cauliflowers are not fit for cultivation in the New Valley because they need moisture from the air. This naturally is a problem. Therefore, one must set out the proper plan for cultivating the New Valley lands on this basis.

"We have actually set out a plan. For example, cauliflower: we have made moisture artificially, by sprinkling in the evening and early morning, and they have grown. Levantine corn did not use to be grown here because of the difference in temperature, but, through experiments, we have started to grow them at the suitable time, which is the beginning of August of every year. This has succeeded to the point where a feddan has started to yield 14 ardebbs.

"As far as peanuts are concerned, we have started planting them in the New Valley and the results have been splendid. Each feddan has yielded 13 ardebbs, while in al-Isma'iliyah and al-Sharqiyah they yield 12 ardebbs!

End Sa'd 'Abd-al-Bari said,

"When I came to the New Valley, it was clear to me that a feddan of reclaimed land, if neglected for a year, would regress 10 years. Therefore, I imposed on my fellow engineers, when the land was distributed to them, the fact that they should bring in their relatives to keep reclaiming the land. Each feddan, in the first 2 years after it is reclaimed must be cultivated with Hijazi bersim and, in the summer, with rice.

"However, the problem in the New Valley is drainage, which must keep abreast of the resurgence in the area of irrigation."

The director of the Directorate of Agriculture added,

"Dates are the main crop. When I came to the Valley, efforts had to be exerted on behalf of this crop, and the Research Institute cooperated with us in this so that we could arrive at the most effective means for dealing with pests. Date cultivation extends over an area of 600 kilometers, from al-Farafirah to Baris in the south. In this area there are half a million date palms, 300,000 of which bear fruit; the rest are seedlings or male trees. In 1970, the average output per palm was 5 kilograms and this rose in 1976 to 45 kilograms.

"Wheat has risen from 5 ardebbs per feddan in 1970 to an average of 8.5 ardebbs in 1976.

"Common fava bean yield has risen from 4.07 to 6.047, and the same is true of high-class fava beans.

"The average yield of rice, which is grown over an area of 3,954 feddans, has risen from 1.25 tons in 1971 to 2.5 tons in 1976. The output of the land in the New Valley is approaching that of the whole Governorate of al-Daqahliyah.

"If this rise in production shows anything, it is the efforts the Directorate of Agriculture in the New Valley has made."

I asked, "What about onions and fine summer corn?"

"As far as onions go, the New Valley is the only governorate free of white rot, which keeps them from being grown in the Governorates of Sawhaj and Asyut. Thus the Governorate of the New Valley is considered an important onion-marketing governorate. We dry the onions so that a ton of first class onions comes to 720 pounds and a ton of second class onions to 540 pounds.

"We are planting 400 feddans with fine summer corn and the output per feddan comes to 5 ardebbs. We are trying to increase the per-feddan yield by providing guidance for the inhabitants."

Eng Sa'd 'Abd-al-Bari went on, "Perhaps you are not aware that we are growing mangoes. Its varieties range from the common to Indian and al-Sinnarah mangoes. We hope to raise the yield, especially since the diseases which threaten mangoes and deform their buds in the Nile Valley, al-Sharqiyah and al-Isma'iliyah do not exist in the New Valley."

What about olives and apricots?

"Cultivation of olives and apricots flourishes in al-Farafirah and al-Dakhilah. It could flourish more. Production must be followed by agricultural processing operations, because the fruit will not tolerate long-distance transportation.

"There is no doubt that Eng Ibrahim Shukri, governor of the New Valley, is constantly giving us guidance and helps us by having our requests answered by Cairo."

What are the problems in the field of agriculture?

"There are two problems. The first is that attention must be given to drainage, so that the cultivated lands will not become useless. However, I hope for good conditions, with the establishment of the Directorate of Irrigation in the New Valley.

"The second problem is that of wells. Each well has a productive life. For us to preserve the cultivated areas, there must be a policy of scheduling to drill replacement wells for the ones which dry up; we must drill no less than 20 wells per year.

"Finally, the Directorate of Agriculture in the New Valley is combating nature and red tape so that the color of the desert may be transformed

into a bright green. It is for this that it is exerting its efforts in every area, so that it may perform its mission in the best manner."

Desert Development Could Ease Population Crush

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Oct 76 p 45

[Article: "The New Valley Is Floating on a Lake of Water"]

[Text] The discussion of water inside the oases of the New Valley is a multi-faceted one. The inhabitants of the Nile Valley, or those who live along its banks, do not feel the importance of each drop of water but the inhabitants of the Sahara do. They look at wells which flow the way they would look at a beautiful girl, at development, verdure, or life and prosperity.

This conversation in the New Valley Governorate with Eng Sa'id 'Abd-al-Nabi, director of irrigation in the New Valley--a conversation about water and wells--is a discussion which, in its conception, sets forth from the premise that the New Valley, with its towns, is becoming a green oasis, with flowing water, wells and fresh ponds.

Eng Sa'id 'Abd-al-Nabi began as an inspector of desert irrigation in 1953. He kept working in this important field until he returned to work in the Desert Development Authority in 1959. Concerning the government's efforts to develop the desert, he stated that it began in 1938 with drilling activities and wells. He mentioned that concern with the New Valley and the provision of water for land in it, which was hemmed in by sand and aridity, began in 1948 with the project to drill 20 wells and the allocation of 450,000 pounds for these wells. That was the first--and greatest--project the area had witnessed. Then the Desert Development Authority, in the period between 1959 and 1975, commenced tremendous reclamation and cultivation efforts.

However, there were difficulties, due to deficiencies in studies bearing on the project. Finally the Ministry of Irrigation was granted responsibility for preserving the water in the valley following issuance of Ministerial Decree No 357 for the year 1976, transferring jurisdiction over water resources to the Ministry of Irrigation.

Eng Sa'id 'Abd-al-Nabi defended the years of the Desert Development Authority's responsibility, when responsibility for the valley was under the jurisdiction of a number of ministries. He said that the resurgence in water in the valley did not arise from a vacuum but began with the support of previous studies.

I sat down with the director of the General New Valley Irrigation Department, a man of long years' experience with the area, and my questions began:

What irrigation takes place in the way of water in the New Valley?

Eng Sa'id 'Abd-al-Ghani said, "The New Valley, as revealed by studies, is situated on an immense lake of groundwater covering an area estimated at about 150,000 square kilometers. The reserves of this lake are estimated at about 6 billion cubic meters.

"In al-Farafirah, for example, there is enough water to irrigate 4,000 feddans without planting; its total daily discharge is about 100,000 cubic meters. It has a flowing well which yields up 22,000 cubic meters of water without pumping.

"In Abu Minqar there is a volume of water of 80,000 cubic meters, enough for the cultivation of 4,000 feddans.

"In West al-Mawhub there are 40,000 cubic meters of water--enough for the cultivation of 2,000 feddans."

How can this water be used for new cultivation?

"At the very outset, let me state that we are short on allocations of funds. However, just a few days ago, some American investors came to cultivate a large area of land in al-Farafirah with mechanized farming, with the crop to go for export. I encourage investment in land by foreign capital."

What is there in the 1976 plan as far as irrigation, water and plants are concerned?

"In the 1976 plan, eight observation wells have been drilled to replace the ones whose tables have dropped or whose walls are collapsing. The decline in the water table is dealt with by installing lifting pumps on the wells. These eight wells will all be in the Oasis of al-Kharijah only.

"The Oasis of al-Dakhilah does not need pumps for lifting water in wells but we have nonetheless started drilling wells for the phosphate project and have begun one of them. There are four other wells for housing which we have been assigned to supervise. The REGWA company is drilling and completing these."

How can the continued [flow] of water in the valley be guaranteed?

"To guarantee the continued [flow] of water, all the inhabitants' wells must be converted to large-scale ones; this will guarantee that their water

is continuous and flowing. In addition, ownership of the water must be transferred to the land, in accordance with Law No 100 for the year 1962, because possession means possession of the water, not of the land. In addition, irrigation must be transformed into continuous irrigation. However, the shortage of credits imposes an obstacle in the way of implementation of our vital projects."

It has been said that it is possible to bring water from Lake Nasir to the New Valley; what do you think?

"There is, in fact, a project which the Desert Development Authority has been studying for a while; it goes by the title of 'The South Valley Project.' This project will draw water from Lake Nasir at a source which lies above it.

"If this project is carried out, it is estimated that it will serve 1 million first through fourth-class feddans. It will cost 800 million pounds. Through a simple calculation, each feddan will cost about 800 pounds.

"If this project is carried out, its benefits will be great. If water is brought from Lake Nasir to the Oasis of Baris by channel or aqueduct, farming will undoubtedly take place on both sides of it. This, within the valley, will guarantee us a permanent flow of water."

How many wells are now producing water in the New Valley and how do they function?

"In the valley there are now 350 wells, which have been drilled over the years; 243 of them are now being used in government projects, while 40 are being used as auxiliaries for the inhabitants' date palms."

Eng Sa'id 'Abd-al-Nabi gave an example, stating,

"In al-Kharijah, for instance, there are 59 flowing wells for government farms in addition to 62 wells on the pump; these give 192,000 cubic meters.

"In addition to that, in al-Kharijah there are also 149 water wells, from which 46,000 cubic meters are discharged, for the inhabitants. This volume can be attained if they are drilled but the shortage of credits is placing an obstacle in the way of this. We have been demanding and insisting on credits and are in the process of receiving them to organize the distribution of water."

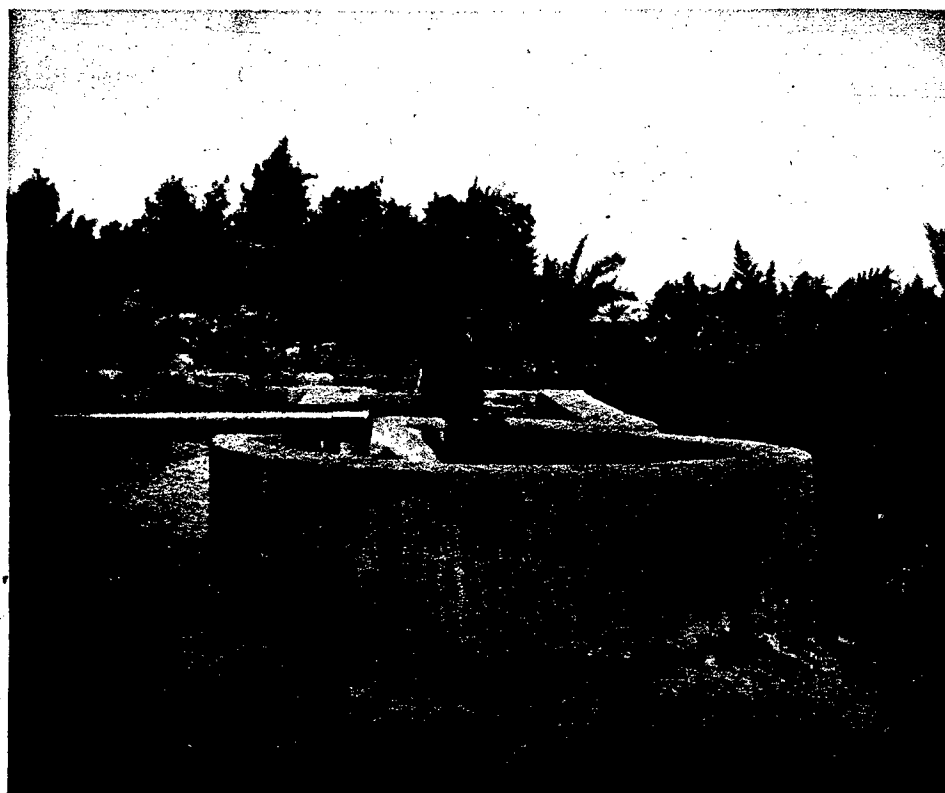
Finally, I asked Eng Sa'is 'Abd-al-Nabi about the future for water there, and what the results have been.

He said, as one who is confident of realizing his wishes, "Our future here in Egypt lies in the desert and in desert development--without making inroads on the water of the Nile, naturally.

"Expansion of desert development must proceed abreast of groundwater and rain research.

"Desert development can swallow up the concentration of population along the narrow valley strip surrounding the Nile, which is packed with inhabitants.

"Thus begin the efforts of organizing water activities and distributing water among the lands and inhabitants; the credits are the backbone to advance the projects as far as possible, so that the New Valley may be a green one, contributing to agricultural development in our country."



Well mut-3 in al-Dakhilah

Spokesman Reviews New Valley Statistics

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Oct 76 p 47

[Article: "Information of Interest to You: What Do You Know About the New Valley?"]

[Text] What do you know about the New Valley? This is the question every Egyptian must ask himself. He must go to this valley where verdure has begun to creep into the land, through the efforts the workers are making in remote areas there under the leadership of Eng Ibrahim Shukri, governor of the New Valley.

The New Valley is considered a desert governorate. It has experienced activity and development for thousands of years. The history of this patch of Egyptian soil goes back to eras of history deeply-rooted in antiquity, recorded by the ancient Egyptians by the relics they left behind in the form of temples and objects yielded up by excavations. In the valley, there are also relics which go back to the Greek and Roman eras, then the Christian era--which has bequeathed important monuments including the al-Bajwat cemetery. Islamic monuments belonging to Islamic periods all speak of the flow of life which coursed over the desert land.

However, from the Mameluke era to the advent of the 23 July 1952 Revolution, this area suffered from neglect and oblivion in all walks of life. A great number of Roman springs were obliterated and many wells fell into disrepair as a result of encroachment of sand into them. Life stopped, or nearly stopped. The number of inhabitants diminished. Finally, once the government began to get interested in the area, which came to be known as the Southern Desert Governorate, life began to seep in.

In 1961, the system of local government was applied to the region and it came to be known by the name of the New Valley Governorate. Local councils sprung up within it along with all the service directorates, and it has proceeded to engage in constant, unremitting activity to the present.

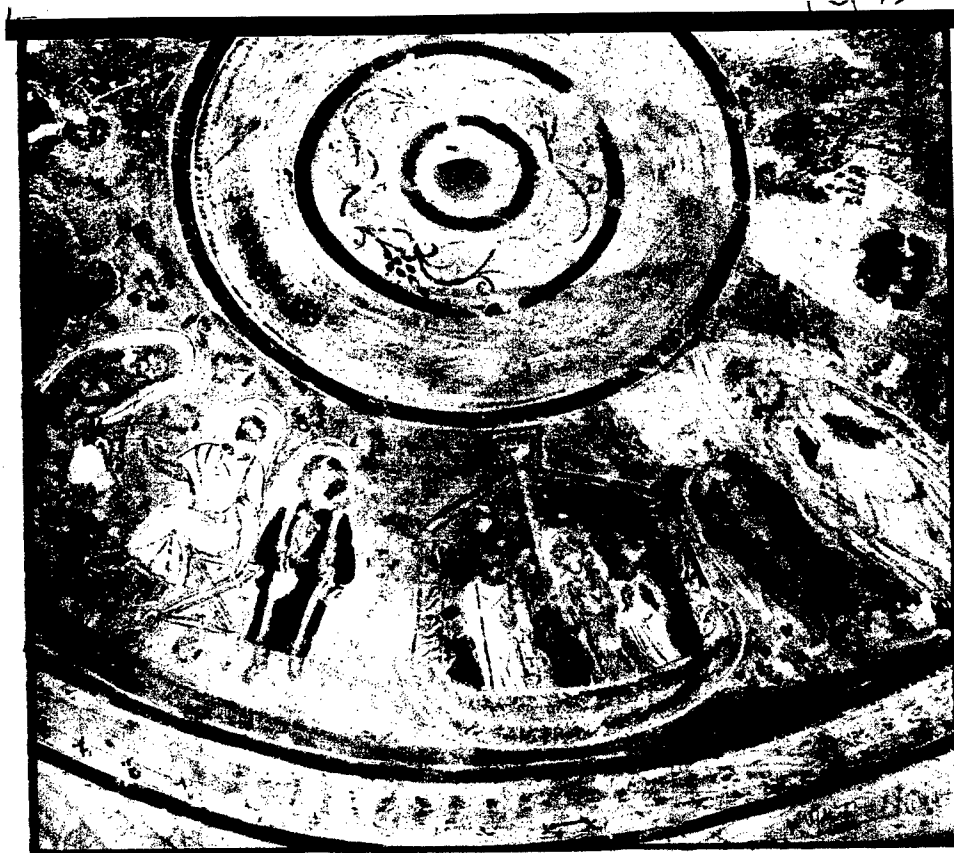
The national holiday of the governorate begins on 3 October of each year.

On that day in October, 1959, the first caravan of development arrived to plow up the interior of the desert, prepare the land, and bring forth water in a renewed search for life.

This date, 3 October, became the national holiday of the governorate and is celebrated every year. As a result, the New Valley Governorate has

become distinguished by gushing springs and wells bestowing verdure and life upon vast sections of the Sahara.

The New Valley Governorate lies to the west of the Nile River.



A cupola in the ancient town of al-Jabwat

It is bounded to the north by Matruh Governorate, to the west by the Libyan border, and to the south by the Sudanese border. A paved 232-kilometer road connects it with Asyut.

The capital of the New Valley is the town of al-Kharijah, which is connected to al-Dakhilah by a 189-kilometer road, also paved, and to Baris by a paved road 90 kilometers long, which is an extension of the Forties Road reaching to the Sudan. In addition there are inner paved roads connected to the villages.

The number of inhabitants in the New Valley comes to about 100,000, distributed within two local administrative districts, al-Kharijah and al-Dakhilah, and 10 village councils.

The governorate consists of three oases: the Oasis of al-Kharijah, the capital; the Oasis of al-Dakhilah; and the Oasis of al-Farafirah.

The New Valley is about 13 million feddans in area; this is broken down as follows:

8 million feddans in al-Kharijah and the southern valley;

1.5 million feddans in al-Dakhilah and West al-Mawhub;

3.5 million feddans in al-Farafirah and Abu Minqar.

In the center of the governorate's flag stands a spike of wheat, which expresses the fact that wheat is the main crop, covering the greatest



The statue commemorating men fallen in combat in the town of al-Kharijah, designed by the artist Sayyid Abu-al-Sa'ud

area of agricultural land, along a plain of groundwater crisscrossed by blue lines.

Transport movement from the Nile to the New Valley and vice versa is continuous and well-organized, especially since there is a high-quality, well-arranged bus route between Cairo and the New Valley every day, a daily bus route from Asyut to al-Kharijah and thence to al-Dakhilah, and another route to Baris. There are also routes connecting the villages by roads from Sufah totalling about 600 kilometers. The bus covers the distance from Cairo to the New Valley in about 7 hours, passing via Bani Suwayf, al-Minya and Asyut.

The governorate has also put a regular bus route into operation covering a distance of 550 kilometers, 350 of which are between al-Dakhilah and al-Farafirah, every 15 days between al-Kharijah and al-Farafirah, to link up the three oases.

It should be mentioned that, alongside the buses, study is now underway to put the air route from Cairo International Airport back into operation, after performing expansions in the al-Kharijah airport to accommodate large new quantities of aircraft.

There are also direct telephone lines between Cairo and the New Valley. One can get in touch with any area of the Republic from the valley by the easiest, most convenient means.

Broadcasting Department engineers have contributed praiseworthy efforts in the New Valley to establish two reinforcing stations for the public program in al-Kharijah and al-Dakhilah during the transmission period, so that residents may be able to hear broadcast programs with total clarity. Short-wave transmissions used to be received in a broken fashion.

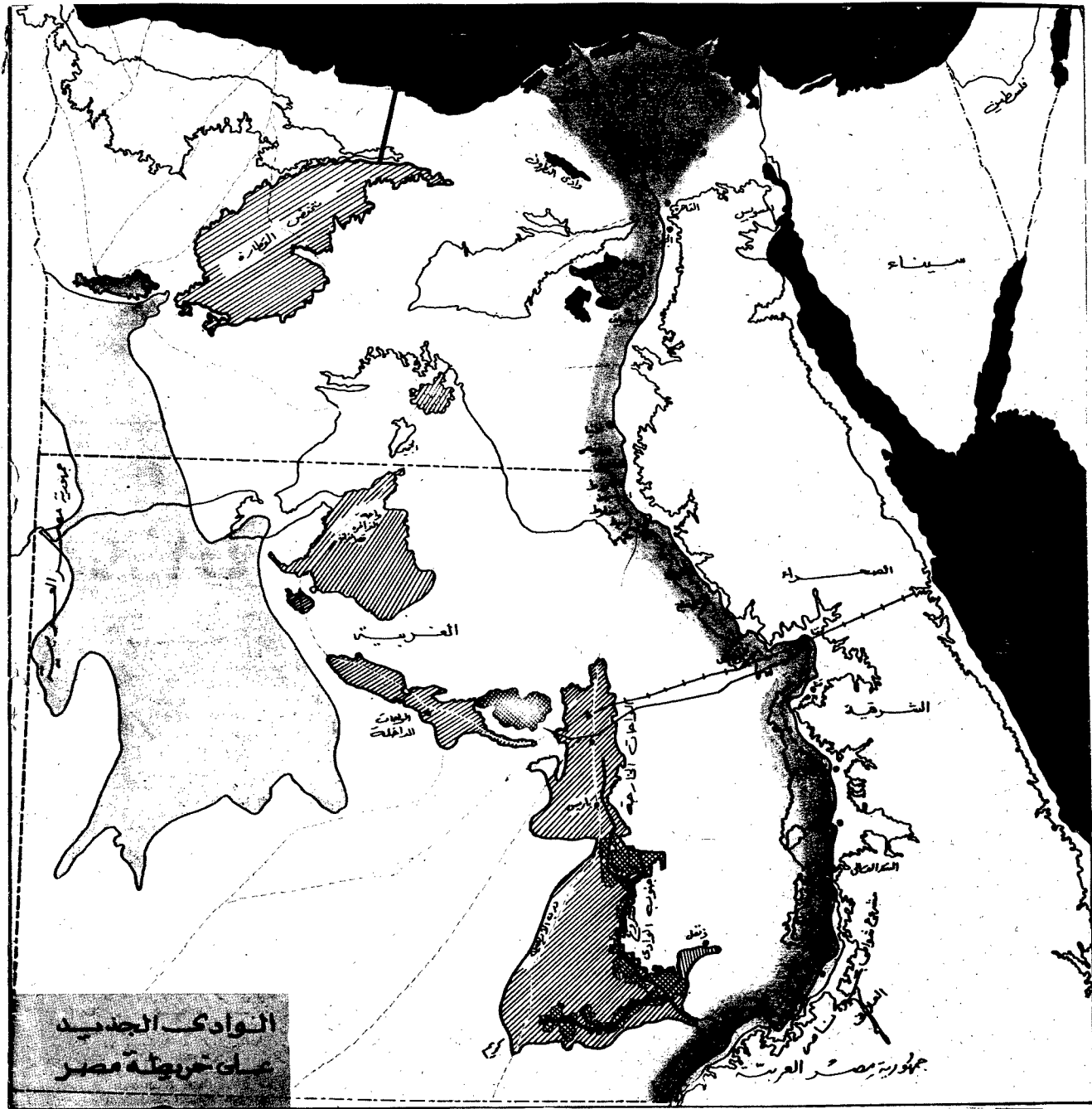
Eng Ibrahim Shukri, governor of the New Valley, inaugurated the two stations during the 23rd anniversary celebration of the Revolution. It is anticipated that all the Voice of the Arabs, People's Broadcast and Middle East Broadcast programs will be reinforced, so that the picture will be rounded out and the residents of the New Valley may enjoy all broadcast programs.

Two years ago an Egyptian Industries Sales Company branch was opened in al-Kharijah along with a branch for people's shops in al-Dakhilah, and there is great hope that the remaining branches of the Consumer Commodity Organization will be completed.

Finally, the General Information Authority has contributed to the construction of a local broadcasting station covering the town of al-Kharijah, through which citizens will be able to take part in national, ethnic and religious celebrations, in addition to a local daily broadcasting program.

The New Valley on the Map of Egypt

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 1 Oct 76 p 48



Al-Bahriyah iron ore
Governorate's borders (492,000 sq km area)
Safaja-Abu Tartur railway
Naj' Hammadi-Abu Tartur powerline
First class road
Trails

Arable land
New South Valley
(1,048,000 feddans)
Abu Tartur--volume
of ore estimated at
1 billion tons

11887
CSO: 4802